

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. A method for rendering a portal graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:
providing for the representation of a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls can be organized in a logical hierarchy;
traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:
associating a theme with a first control in the set of controls;
rendering the first control according to the theme;
rendering any descendants of the first control according to the theme;
wherein any descendants of the first control can override the theme; and
wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.
2. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the desktop is a view of a portal;
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
3. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
4. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and
wherein the book is represented by a book control.
5. The method of claim 1 wherein:
one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
7. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
8. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
accepting a request.
9. The method of claim 8 wherein:
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
10. The method of claim 8 wherein:
the request originates from a Web browser.
11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
generating a response.
12. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.
13. The method of claim 1 wherein:
associating the theme with the first control can occur when the first control is rendered.
14. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.
15. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the GUI.

16. The method of claim 1 wherein:

rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in parallel with rendering of other controls.

17. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

19. The method of claim 17 wherein:

the properties file can specify at least one image.

20. The method of claim 1 wherein:

the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.

21. A method for rendering a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:

accepting a request;

mapping the request to the set of controls that represent a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book, and wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;

traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:

associating a theme with a first control in the set of controls;

rendering the first control according to the theme;

rendering any descendants of the first control according to the theme;

and

wherein any descendants of the first control can override the theme.

22. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the desktop is a view of a portal;
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
23. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
24. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and
wherein the book is represented by a book control.
25. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
26. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the request originates from a Web browser.
27. The method of claim 21, further comprising:
generating a response.
28. The method of claim 1 wherein:
one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.
29. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
30. The method of claim 1 wherein:

a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.

31. The method of claim 21 wherein:

a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.

32. The method of claim 21 wherein:

associating a theme with the first control can occur when the first control is rendered.

33. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.

34. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the GUI.

35. The method of claim 21 wherein:

rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in parallel with rendering of other controls.

36. The method of claim 21 wherein:

the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.

37. The method of claim 36 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

38. The method of claim 36 wherein:

the properties file can specify at least one image.

39. The method of claim 21 wherein:
the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.
40. A method for rendering a graphical user interface (GUI), comprising:
providing for the representation of a GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a plurality of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;
traversing the representation, wherein the traversing comprises:
 - associating a first theme with a first control in the plurality of controls;
 - rendering the first control according to the first theme;
 - associating a second theme with a second control in the plurality of controls;
 - rendering the second control according to the second theme; and
 - wherein the second control is a descendant of the first control.
41. The method of claim 40, further comprising:
accepting a request.
42. The method of claim 40 wherein:
the desktop is a view of a portal;
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
43. The method of claim 40 wherein:
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
44. The method of claim 40 wherein:
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and

- wherein the book is represented by a book control.
45. The method of claim 41 wherein:
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.
 46. The method of claim 41 wherein:
the request originates from a Web browser.
 47. The method of claim 40, further comprising:
generating a response.
 48. The method of claim 1 wherein:
the first control can respond to an event raised by the second control.
 49. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
 50. The method of claim 1 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
 51. The method of claim 40 wherein:
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window, window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder, portlet and toggle button.
 52. The method of claim 40 wherein:
the first control inherits the first theme from a parent control.
 53. The method of claim 40 wherein:
the first theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of the first control in the GUI.

54. The method of claim 40 wherein:

the rendering the first control can be accomplished in parallel with the rendering of the second control.

55. The method of claim 40 wherein:

a theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.

56. The method of claim 55 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

57. The method of claim 55 wherein:

the properties file can specify at least one image.

58. The method of claim 40 wherein:

the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.

59. A machine readable medium having instructions stored thereon that when executed by a processor cause a system to:

provide for the representation of GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;

traverse the representation, wherein the traversing comprises instructions to cause the system to:

associate theme with a first control in the set of controls;

render the first control according to the theme;

render any descendants of the first control according to the theme;

wherein any descendants of the first control can override the theme; and

wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.

60. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising:

accepting a request.

61. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the desktop is a view of a portal;
wherein the desktop can be represented by a desktop control; and
wherein the desktop control is hierarchically superior to the shell control and to the book control.
62. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the look and feel determines the appearance of the portal;
wherein the look and feel can be represented by a look and feel control; and
wherein the theme is a variation of the look and feel.
63. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the book can be used to navigate to at least one portal page; and
wherein the book is represented by a book control.
64. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
one of the set of controls can respond to an event raised by another of the set of controls.
65. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable persistence mechanism.
66. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
a control can have an interchangeable rendering mechanism.
67. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising instructions that when executed cause the system to:
accept a request.
68. The machine readable medium of claim 67 wherein:
the request in a hypertext transfer protocol (HTTP) request.

69. The machine readable medium of claim 67 wherein:
the request originates from a Web browser.
70. The machine readable medium of claim 59, further comprising instructions
that when executed cause the system to:
generate a response.
71. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
a control can represent one of: button, text field, menu, table, window,
window control, title bar, pop-up window, check-box button, radio button, window
frame, desktop, shell, head, body, header, footer, book, page, layout, placeholder,
portlet and toggle button.
72. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
associating the theme with the first control can occur when the first control is
rendered.
73. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the first control inherits the theme from a parent control.
74. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the theme specifies the appearance and/or functioning of an control in the
GUI.
75. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
rendering the first control according to the theme can be accomplished in
parallel with rendering of other controls.
76. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:
the theme can be specified in whole or in part by a properties file.
77. The machine readable medium of claim 76 wherein:

the properties file can include at least one of: 1) cascading style sheet; 2) Java Server Page; 3) Extensible Markup Language; 4) text; 5) Hypertext Markup Language; 6) Extensible Hypertext Markup Language; 7) JavaScript; and 8) Flash MX.

78. The machine readable medium of claim 76 wherein:

the properties file can specify at least one image.

79. The machine readable medium of claim 59 wherein:

the GUI is part of a portal on the World Wide Web.

80. A computer data signal embodied in a transmission medium, comprising:

a code segment including instructions to provide for the representation of GUI desktop, a GUI look and feel, and a GUI book as a set of controls wherein the controls are organized in a logical hierarchy;

a code segment including instructions to traverse the representation comprising:

a code segment including instructions to associate theme with a first control in the set of controls;

a code segment including instructions to render the first control according to the theme;

a code segment including instructions to render any descendants of the first control according to the theme;

wherein any descendants of the first control can override the theme; and

wherein one of the set of controls can communicate with another of the set of controls.